

**TESTIMONY**  
**Carl P. Fortuna, Jr.**  
**First Selectman, Town of Old Saybrook**  
**Before the Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee**  
**March 3, 2022**

**RE: OPPOSE - Proposed SB - 21 AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE PROPERTY TAX ON CERTAIN RESIDENTIAL REAL PROPERTY**

SB-21, which imposes a statewide property tax on certain homes, sets a very difficult precedent given Connecticut's overreliance on the property tax to fund critical local services and projects.

Connecticut relies on the property tax to fund local services more than most other states in the nation, according to data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2019. This places enormous pressure on homeowners and businesses that must bear the burden for paying the property taxes that towns rely on to fund education and other local programs and services.

Rather than addressing the need for property tax relief, this proposal moves Connecticut in the wrong direction by opening the door for a statewide property tax to fund education programs that the state has a constitutional obligation to fully fund.

This bill is targeted at communities that are fortunate enough to have valuable real estate. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, there are likely to be many homes that approach or exceed the threshold value as stated in SB 21. While \$1.2m seems like a high value, this bill will touch far more homes and families than its good intentions. I believe this bill will also depress real estate values in our communities unnecessarily.

Under this proposal, the property taxes levied by the state on certain homes are not likely to benefit the community in which the home is located. Instead, the property taxes would be diverted to fund special education costs and the settlement costs of the Sheff v. O'Neill lawsuit.

Please oppose efforts to enact a statewide property tax on homeowners and, instead, explore opportunities to provide meaningful property tax relief to residents and businesses.